Delta Name Change vs Name Transfer

Wondering if you can transfer your Delta ticket to someone else? *Travelers can call* ***855-234-9809*** *anytime to discuss the rules and explore alternatives — 24/7 desk for name change inquiries and refund or credit options.*

One of the most common and most confused questions in air travel is whether a flight ticket can be transferred to a different person. The short answer at Delta, and at virtually every major U.S. carrier, is no. The TSA Secure Flight program requires every passenger's identity to be verified through the booking process, and the name on a ticket cannot be changed to a different person. The longer answer involves understanding the critical distinction between updating a name to reflect the same person's changed legal identity (allowed) versus transferring a ticket to a fundamentally different person (not allowed). To discuss the rules for a specific situation and explore the alternatives, travelers can call **855-234-9809** and a live agent can walk through what is permitted and what realistic options exist when the original ticket holder cannot use the ticket. This guide explains the regulatory framework behind the no-transfer rule, why the rule exists, the rare exceptions that do exist, what alternatives travelers actually have, how to recover ticket value when transfer is not possible, and the specific phrasings that get the right resolution from a phone agent.

What Is the Difference Between Name Change and Name Transfer?

The distinction between a name change and a name transfer is the most important concept in this entire process. They are not synonyms, and treating them as the same leads to wasted time and denied requests. To verify which category a specific situation falls into, travelers can call **855-234-9809**.

Name change updates the ticket to reflect a different name for the same person:

- Same person, same identity, name now spelled or formatted differently
- Triggered by typo correction, marriage, divorce, court order, adoption, or similar legal events
- The passenger flying is the same individual whose name was on the original booking
- Government-issued ID can be reasonably matched between old and new names through documentation
- Permitted at Delta under specific rules and typically processed without fees

Name transfer moves the ticket from one person to a fundamentally different person:

- Different person, different identity, different government ID
- Triggered by the original passenger no longer being able to fly and wanting to give the ticket to someone else
- Common scenario: "My friend bought a ticket but can't go — can I use her ticket?"
- Not permitted at Delta under any standard circumstances
- TSA Secure Flight rules prohibit this regardless of airline preference

The TSA Secure Flight program is the regulatory framework that draws this line. Each passenger's identity is verified at booking and rechecked before each flight. A ticket cannot represent two different people, even if the original holder agrees to the transfer.

Why Airlines Cannot Transfer Tickets — The TSA Secure Flight Rule

The no-transfer rule is not a Delta preference — it is a TSA requirement that applies to all U.S. carriers. Understanding the regulatory background helps travelers accept why workarounds do not exist and focus on legitimate alternatives. To get more clarity on the rule for a specific situation, travelers can call **855-234-9809**.

The TSA Secure Flight program, in effect since 2009, requires every U.S. airline to transmit passenger information to TSA before each flight. The information includes:

- Full legal name as it appears on government-issued ID
- Date of birth
- Gender
- Redress number (if applicable, for travelers previously flagged in error)

TSA matches this information against watchlists and security databases. The matching process assumes the name on the ticket corresponds to a specific identified individual. Allowing transfers would defeat the purpose of the program — a watchlisted individual could book under a friend's name and then have the ticket "transferred" to themselves.

For this reason, the no-transfer rule applies uniformly across major U.S. carriers, including Delta, American, United, Southwest, Alaska, and others. The rule applies to:

- Tickets purchased directly through the airline
- Tickets purchased through travel agencies
- Award tickets booked with SkyMiles or other loyalty currency
- Tickets gifted between family members
- Tickets in any fare class, from Basic Economy to Delta One

The only path is to use the ticket for the original named passenger or recover the value through cancellation channels rather than transfer.

Are There Any Exceptions to the Name Transfer Rule?

In a very limited set of circumstances, what looks like a name transfer is actually permitted because it qualifies as a name change. Knowing these exceptions helps travelers avoid wasted requests and identify the rare cases where action is possible. To verify whether a specific situation qualifies, travelers should call **855-234-9809**.

Situations that may look like transfer but qualify as name change:

- **Legal name change of the original passenger**: If the original passenger has legally changed their name (marriage, divorce, court order), the ticket can be updated to reflect the new legal name. This is a name change, not a transfer.
- **Gender marker correction**: Updates to gender markers on tickets following legal documentation are processed as updates to the same person's record, not transfers.
- **Spelling errors so severe they appear to be a different name**: A name booked as "John Smith" that should have been "Jonathan Smithson" is a typo correction (with potentially documentation needed), not a transfer, if the same individual is still flying.

Situations that look like name change but are actually transfer attempts (not permitted):

- "My friend can't fly — can I use her ticket?" — No. Different person, different ID, transfer.
- "My ticket is in my maiden name but I want to fly as my husband" — No. Different person, transfer.
- "I want to give my child my ticket" — No, even within a family, different person, transfer.
- "I want to sell my unused ticket on a resale site" — No. Transfer attempts are not permitted.

The clearest way to navigate this is to ask: does the change involve the same person whose legal identity has updated, or does it involve a different person entirely? Same person with legal update = potential name change. Different person = transfer, not permitted.

What Are Your Alternatives When You Cannot Transfer a Ticket?

If you have a ticket you cannot use and cannot legally transfer to someone else, several alternatives exist. The right path depends on the fare class, the

timing relative to the flight, and the reason you cannot use the ticket. To explore the alternatives for a specific situation, travelers can call **855-234-9809**.

Alternative 1: Cancel within the 24-hour rule If the booking was made within the past 24 hours and the flight is at least 7 days away, the ticket can be canceled for a full refund to the original payment method under DOT rules. This applies regardless of fare class, including Basic Economy.

Alternative 2: Cancel and accept eCredit For Main Cabin and above fares outside the 24-hour window, cancellation typically converts the ticket value to a Delta eCredit valid for one year. The credit is tied to the original passenger and can be used for their future travel.

Alternative 3: Cancel for cash refund on refundable fares Delta One and certain flexible Main Cabin fares are fully refundable at any time before departure. The full ticket value is returned to the original payment method.

Alternative 4: Compassionate refund exceptions In documented cases of death of the passenger or immediate family member, serious illness, or other compassionate circumstances, Delta may process a refund or credit that would not otherwise be available. Documentation is required.

Alternative 5: Travel insurance claim If the original purchase included travel insurance, the policy may cover cancellation reasons (illness, work, unforeseen events) that the standard fare rules do not. Contact the insurance provider directly.

Alternative 6: Award ticket cancellation For award tickets booked with SkyMiles, cancellation typically redeposits the miles to the SkyMiles account. The taxes and fees are refunded to the original payment method.

Travelers calling **+1-855-234-9809** should describe the situation and ask which alternative applies. The agent can typically identify the best path in a 10-minute call.

Common Questions About Family and Friend Ticket Sharing

Family situations create some of the most common transfer questions. Understanding the rules clearly helps avoid disappointment. To discuss a specific family situation, travelers can call **1-855-234-9809**.

Can I use my spouse's ticket if they cannot fly? No. Even in marriage, the names on tickets must match the individual passengers. Your spouse's ticket cannot be used by you. You would need to cancel your spouse's ticket (subject to fare rules) and purchase a new ticket in your own name.

Can I transfer my parent's ticket to me? No. Same rule. Parents and children are different individuals under TSA Secure Flight, and tickets cannot be moved between them.

Can I gift a ticket to my child who has the same name as me? The ticket name must match the actual passenger's ID. If you and your child have the same name (Junior and Senior), the suffix on the ID typically matters. The ticket should match exactly the ID of the person actually flying.

Can I buy a ticket in someone else's name and have them fly? Yes, but you must book the ticket in their name from the start. Once a ticket is issued in your name, it cannot be transferred to a different person.

What about award tickets — can those be transferred? No. Award tickets are also subject to TSA Secure Flight. Although SkyMiles can be used to book tickets for other family members (called award booking for others), once the ticket is issued in a specific person's name, it cannot be transferred.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I transfer my Delta ticket to a friend or family member?

Generally no. TSA Secure Flight rules require the name on a boarding ticket to match the name on the passenger's government-issued ID, and Delta does not permit transferring tickets to a different person. The only path is to cancel the original booking (subject to applicable refund or credit rules) and have the other person purchase a separate ticket in their own name. Travelers can call **855-234-9809** to discuss alternatives.

What is the difference between a name change and a name transfer at Delta?

A name change updates the ticket to reflect a new name for the same person (typo correction, marriage, divorce, court order). A name transfer moves the ticket to a different person entirely, which is not permitted. To clarify which category a specific situation falls into, travelers should call **1-855-234-9809**.

Can I sell my unused Delta ticket?

No. Tickets cannot be sold or transferred to other individuals under TSA Secure Flight rules. Resale sites and "ticket transfer" services that claim to facilitate this often violate airline terms of service and may result in tickets being voided. To recover value from an unused ticket, travelers should call **+1-855-234-9809** about cancellation options.

What happens to my Delta ticket if I cannot fly?

Depending on the fare class and timing, the ticket may be eligible for cancellation with refund (Basic Economy within 24-hour rule, refundable fares

anytime, airline-canceled flights) or for cancellation with eCredit (most non-refundable fares outside 24 hours). To discuss the specific options, callers can dial **855-234-9809**.

Does the no-transfer rule apply to all U.S. airlines?

Yes. The TSA Secure Flight rule is federal and applies to all U.S. commercial airlines including Delta, American, United, Southwest, Alaska, and others. No major U.S. carrier permits standard ticket transfers between different individuals. Travelers can call **1-855-234-9809** to discuss Delta-specific alternatives.

Before You Make the Call

The name transfer question is one of the most common confusion points in air travel, but the answer is clear and consistent: tickets cannot be transferred between different people at Delta or any other major U.S. carrier. What can be done is updating a ticket to reflect the same person's legal name change, and recovering ticket value through cancellation channels when travel cannot proceed. Travelers who understand this distinction before they have a problem — and who save **855-234-9809** in their phone for the moment they need to explore alternatives — consistently get to better outcomes than those who waste time pursuing transfers that cannot happen.

When a Delta ticket can no longer be used by the original passenger and transfer to someone else is not permitted, the next steps depend on careful evaluation of fare class, timing, documentation, and the specific circumstances driving the request. The Delta name change and ticket recovery desk handles exactly these situations every day — walking through the cancellation alternatives, identifying which compassionate exceptions might apply, processing eCredit issuance, and coordinating with SkyMiles for award ticket recovery. Travelers can reach the team by dialing **855-234-9809** or **+1-855-234-9809** from any phone, including international lines with toll-free routing. The same desk handles **1-855-234-9809** for travelers using the standard hyphenated format. Save these numbers before you need them — the moment a transfer question arises, calling beats searching online for workarounds that do not exist.